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A
LETTER
TO THE
EARL OF MOIRA,
IN
DEFENCE
OF THE
CONDUCT
OF
HIS MAJESTY'S MINISTERS,
AND OF THE
ARMY
IN
IRELAND.

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AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM.

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LONDON:  
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DEFENCE



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A R M Y

IN

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LETTER,

&c.

MY LORD,

**Y**OUR Lordship has been pleased to give to the public a melancholy picture of the state of affairs in Ireland; and your station in the country must impart to it a degree of weight, to which otherwise it is little entitled. It is therefore for the double purpose of showing to your Lordship that you have been the dupe of others, as well as of preventing you from innocently duping the people of England, that I shall presume to offer a few observations upon the very erroneous account you have just delivered, of the state of affairs in that quarter.

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My Lord, it is not for me to arraign the motives which have influenced your Lordship, to give to the public so fallacious a description of the real situation of the north of Ireland. How far it is prudent or wise, at this eventful moment, to encourage the enemy to a second attempt upon Ireland, by such exaggerated representations as are calculated to inspirit his hopes, and to depress those of your countrymen, is in your Lordship's breast to determine: but at least, it is for me to show how grossly your Lordship has been deceived; how unjustly the government of Ireland has been aspersed; and to endeavour, by the sober statement of a few facts, which cannot be refuted, to destroy the baneful effect which your Lordship's declamatory and ill-judged speech is calculated to produce upon the public mind.

For this purpose, my Lord, it is necessary to advert to the situation of Ireland a short time back. Your Lordship charges the present state of that country to be the consequence of the measures now pursuing by Government, for retaining it in a state of peace and subordination. It is fair, therefore, to inquire, what was its condition before the great and opulent county

of





of Down, and other districts in the province of Ulster, were proclaimed, to which the present discontents are ascribed. At that period, the measures of which your Lordship has so loudly complained, had not taken place. The complaints which you represent to arise out of them could have no existence; and therefore we may fairly recur to that era, as a test by which we may examine the question at issue between Government and their opponents. Does your Lordship not know, that before the meeting of the Irish Parliament in November, 1796, an alarming conspiracy was generally conceived to exist, which has since been detected; and that many baronies throughout the North were in a state of the greatest insubordination and tumult? Is not your Lordship aware, that this conspiracy had for its object the reduction of rents, the division of property, the abolition of tithes, the absolute *destruction of Government*, and a *general massacre* of the principal gentry throughout the provinces? Was not the constitution then nearly put down, and the laws in general silenced, by a system of terror gradually extending itself over the country, and threatening in its progress both a dissolution of govern-  
ment

ment and society? Can any impartial spectator, then in the country, deny this? At that period your Lordship was in England; you are therefore entitled to call for proofs. Perhaps, if you had been upon the spot, the scandal of the scene would have impressed upon your Lordship's mind, the necessity of being a little more cautious in relying so implicitly upon your channels of intelligence. You would then have seen a country rich in population, soil, and industry, in the wantonness of prosperity conspiring against its own happiness, and driven to the verge of insurrection through the diabolical machinations of demagogues and traitors. Yes, my Lord, I aver, that at that period hardly a magistrate dared to do his duty. Scarcely a juryman would venture to discharge his trust, so universally were they under the influence of terror, from the lawless conduct of that desperate body of men denominated *United Irishmen*. At the spring assizes at Carrickfergus, both the sheriff and the jury were universally said to have received letters, threatening them with death if one United Irishman was convicted. Many gentlemen constantly carried pocket pistols about them, as a security against assassination.

fination. Mr. FINLEY, a magistrate of considerable property and respectability, near Trim, had already been fired at, and was dangerously wounded, by an unseen hand, while walking near his own grounds. In open day, in the town of Lisburn, near Belfast, in the month of September, 1796, the Rev. Mr. JOHNSON, an active and able magistrate, was shot in the streets as he was mounting his horse, for daring to be superior to fear in the discharge of his duty. In the month of November of the same year, another magistrate, the Rev. Mr. CLELAND, was shot at, in New Town Ards, on the same account; and magistrates the most eminent, were obliged to have soldiers living in their houses, to protect them from the sanguinary vengeance of these deluded and ferocious people. Was not Lord LONDONDERRY, and is he not to this moment, compelled to have a military guard at his house? Were not witnesses against any of these individuals either cut off by assassination, compelled to emigrate, or necessitated to live under military protection? Were not these murders frequent? Does not your Lordship know that at that very period (in November, 1796), the King's stores in Belfast were robbed, and a quantity of gun-  
 powder



powder carried off by force? Was not the country stricken with universal consternation, in consequence of these atrocious scenes? And was there not, at the same time, a general expectation of a foreign invasion?

Yes, my Lord, such was the state of the north of Ireland when Parliament met in the month of November, 1796. What then ensued? The intended invasion was announced from the throne; and the country was called upon to put itself into a state of adequate resistance to the enemy. Yeomanry corps were then ordered to be raised, for the purpose of maintaining peace through each barony, and of enabling Government, in the event of necessity, to concentrate as much as possible the regular military force of the kingdom. In this situation, I ask your Lordship, if the conspirators in the North did not employ every base art to prevent as much as possible the formation of these useful corps? At one moment they misrepresented to the people the oath of allegiance to be taken by individuals entering into these corps; at another the most open threats were practised; and in some instances, the most daring and cruel violence was employed

ployed with successful effect, to terrify those into resigning, who had already enlisted therein. Does your Lordship require any proof of this? Read it in the tragical fate of the gallant but unfortunate Mr. CUMMINS. In one night (in the year 1796), a body of United Irishmen, with blackened faces, forcibly disarmed several yeomen belonging to Lord LONDONDERRY's corps, by entering into their houses in the dead of the night, and seizing upon their arms and accoutrements; and because this brave gentleman, who was one of their officers, nobly refused to surrender up his arms, they inhumanly butchered him with the most savage barbarity. Did not the lamented Mr. HAMILTON meet with a similar fate? Shortly after they appeared in arms, in open day, in the vicinity of Cumber, to rescue two men then carrying to Downpatrick jail. Near Belfast a considerable number of them, in the course of a night, dug a trench of great labour across the exercising ground belonging to the yeoman cavalry of that place, and covered it over so artfully, that it was only discovered on the ensuing day by the officer at the head of the line falling into it, with his horse. Is not this a fact notoriously known? Did they not, about the

same time, begin forcibly to disarm all the inhabitants of the country who were not united with them, by nocturnal visits? Did not families fly into Belfast for safety, dreading to sleep in the country? Did not others quit Ireland altogether? Did not a regular battalion of United Irishmen, in the spring of this year, march to Mr. KENNEDY's, at Kentraw, near Belfast, and carry away thirteen stand of arms forcibly from the family, with as much systematic regularity as if they had been invested with lawful authority so to do? And is it not within your Lordship's knowledge, that before the county of Down was proclaimed, several gentlemen's estates immediately in your Lordship's vicinity were despoiled of their best timber, for the purposes of manufacturing pikes for the insurgents?

In this situation, what was the government of Ireland to do? they had seen the laws openly violated; they had witnessed the blood of the magistrate to flow; they had beheld illegal associations administering unlawful oaths throughout the country, for the purpose of overthrowing the constitution; they had seen the authority of the state despised, in the dis-

arming



arming of its soldiery; they had the warning of revolutionary preparations, in the war-whoop of sedition sounded throughout the country, in the forging of arms, and the carrying off of the King's military stores. The press at Belfast was in a state of open hostility to its existence; the insurgents every day became more daring, and the loyal part of the country grew clamorous for protection against the dangers which encompassed them. Nothing, therefore, was left to Government, but the interposition of military force to check acts of rebellion which defied and suspended the civil power; to renew the existence of the constitution, by rescuing the laws from that state of imbecility into which the lawless violence of a banditti had plunged them. It was only then, when every measure of lenity and forbearance had failed, and the conspirators were on the eve of a concerted and general insurrection, that the province of Ulster was proclaimed, and the inhabitants were called upon to deliver up their arms in *trust for themselves*, and *to be restored hereafter*, to prevent the United Irishmen from getting them into their possession. This, my Lord, I aver to have been the state of the north of Ireland at

the moment when that salutary measure was adopted, and to it alone is to be ascribed the quietude it has since enjoyed. Outrage has greatly ceased; confidence is returned; the laws are re-assuming their sway; and persons and property have derived a security from it, to which for a considerable time before they were entirely strangers. Such have been the beneficial results of that wise and necessary measure.

On the whole, therefore, it must appear, that antecedently to the county of Down, and other parts, being put out of the King's peace, and consequently prior to the adoption of those coercive measures which your Lordship so warmly arraigns as the cause of the present disorders, many parts of the country were in a state utterly lawless; and that a system of terror, founded in blood and massacre, had suspended the operation of the civil power, and spread general apprehension every where.—Hence it became necessary to counteract one system of terror against the laws, by meeting it with another in their support; and the military strength of Ireland was in consequence increased, to protect it from the twofold danger,

ger, of foreign invasion, and internal treason. But the difference between the two systems is this—that the one had for its object to subvert the government; and the other, to protect both the laws and the people.

This, my Lord, is the general state of the question between the government of Ireland and the disaffected part of the people, corrupted by French principles. But I would further ask your Lordship, whether, in your own immediate neighbourhood, the most criminal excesses were not committed, before it was put into a state of proclamation, both at Sainfield, Ballynahinch, and Killeleah? Was not the tree of liberty actually planted in the latter town, so early as in the autumn of 1796? Was not the castle at Hillsborough broke open, and all the arms carried off? And has not your Lordship heard, since you were last in Ireland, that a meeting of delegates from the different societies of United Irishmen was held near your Lordship's estate in the North, about the middle of June last, for the express purpose of considering whether they should then rise, or defer their plan to a future period? Was it not proposed at that meeting to cut off the  
troops



troops in detail ; and to commence the insurrection with massacre ? Is not this known to General LAKE ? and was not the question carried by a trifling majority, for remaining quiet ? What are the presumptive proofs of this ? The flight of some of the conspirators, and the apprehending of others. Did not eight of them make their escape from the port of Bangor, upon finding the plot discovered ? And were there not several of their intended officers in confinement in the artillery barracks in Belfast, in August last ? When, in addition to those facts, we advert to the trial of JACKSON, and to the conviction of others, proved to be in league against the constitution, as well as to the mass of information contained in the Report of the Secret Committee of the last session, it must irrefragably appear, that his Majesty's Ministers in Ireland would have abandoned their duty, and betrayed the dearest interests of the state, if they had tamely suffered a system of disaffection gradually to extend itself over the country, until ripe for action, in preference to crushing the evil in its infancy, by measures of energy suited to the magnitude of the occasion.

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My Lord, I have said, and I think established, that many parts of Ireland were in a state of the greatest disorder, and a strong spirit of discontent reigning among the people, before the present system was resorted to, a few months since, of employing the military to protect the laws.

It may therefore be asked—What then occasioned that spirit among the people in 1796, independently of those religious animosities in particular parts, which are not chargeable to the administration of the country? Did it arise from any act, on the part of the government, tending to provoke the people? Or was it the consequence of any attempt to mislead them by incendiary publications; or to stimulate them to rebellion by secret conspiracies against the state?—It could not be the consequence of oppression on the part of the government, because the conduct of Government, for a series of years, has been marked by a laudable endeavour, in various ways, to meliorate the condition of the people.—What are the proofs? They are these:—The people of Ireland desired to have the duration of their Parliament limited—it was done. A cry was raised for  
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the repeal of Poyning's Law, and the independency of the Legislature—the law was abrogated, and their imperial sovereignty recognised ! They called for a restriction of the Pension List—it was granted. They claimed a Free Trade Bill—it was passed. They desired a Responsibility Bill—it was admitted. They wished for the independence of their Judges—it followed. The Roman Catholics prayed for a restoration of their Elective Franchise—their prayer was heard. What then do these desperate societies now claim ? What but the subversion of that constitution from whence so many blessings have been entailed upon themselves ? Yes, my Lord, under the flimsy veil of a reform in Parliament (an abstract question, little suited either to the times, or to the understanding of the lower orders of society), they are endeavouring to pull down the fabric of their government, for the purpose of substituting in its stead that hideous system of anarchy and plunder, which, in desolating France, has annihilated the trade, the industry, and the morals of her inhabitants. This is the proved and acknowledged object of these incendiaries. It cannot have escaped your Lordship's notice, that for some years past they



have been actively employed in the pursuit of this wicked scheme. Is it not notorious that they have leagued to deliver the kingdom to a FOREIGN INVADER?—Can this be to reform the Parliament? They have formed themselves into regular battalions, nominated their officers, supplied themselves with arms, provided gunpowder and artillery, manufactured pikes, sworn each other to secrecy, in defiance of the law, ORGANIZED their convention on the French model, collected money, and maintained a traitorous intercourse with the enemy. Can all this have only in view to reform the Parliament? Common sense rejects the supposition; and was not this traitorous plan conceived before any part of the country was proclaimed to be in a state of disturbance?

This, then, has been the state of Ireland for some years back. What was the language of Mr. Toone, the parent founder of these societies? Does he not, in his letter, contained in the Report of the Secret Committee of the Irish House of Lords, unmask the object of their views at once, by roundly stating, that it is impossible to suppose the Parliament of Ireland can ever be brought to

regenerate itself—that such a reform as they might concede, would little answer public expectation—that both parties in Parliament are playing their own game, and the opposition too much connected with the aristocracy, to be really the friends of the people? And he further proceeds to say, that to reform Parliament by such means is, as if “ *a plaister were to be applied to the finger, for a mortification in the bowels.*” Here then is the language of this high-priest of sedition; and such are the tenets his followers have adopted.

—In this growing and dangerous conspiracy against the state, the legislature had recourse to such restrictive laws as went in their principle to grapple with the mischief, and in their operation to protect the real liberties of the people. For this purpose, the laws known by the name of the Convention, Gunpowder, and Insurrection Bills were passed, all fettering, in some degree, the views of these revolutionary bodies, but leaving the honest citizen no reasonable ground to imagine that any infringement was intended on his rights.

I am well aware that it is to these laws that  
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many ascribe a portion of the discontents which prevail in Ireland.—The government has been charged with a design, in these, of infringing upon the liberties of the subject; and the spirit of party has not been wanting to give them this construction. But, is it hard that individuals should be restricted from conspiring to overthrow their country? Is it hard that they should be restrained from administering oaths of secrecy to each other for political purposes which avoid the light? Such is the object of these laws, which have only been enacted to save the kingdom from the miseries of anarchy. In such a state of things, when a mine was preparing to destroy the laws, the liberties, and the religion of the people—when the press, co-operating with the views of traitors, was teeming with the most daring and inflammatory libels against the laws, the justice, and authority of the state—when even the mild spirit of our constitution was converted into a weapon against itself, from the privilege it imparts to licentiousness, and the impunity which too often it ensures to guilt—was it not a time for the constitutional guardians of Irish liberty to save the constitution from the destruction with which it was threatened, by fortifying it with



new securities against the unexampled dangers which assailed it? To say that these laws are repugnant to the nature of our constitution, is only to misunderstand its genuine spirit. The principle of the constitution is to communicate and ensure, to every man, as great a portion of civil liberty as is compatible with the nature of his condition, and to bind him, in return, to a due submission to its authority. It necessarily follows, where measures are avowedly pursued which equally endanger the right of the subject, and the authority of the state, that every law is consonant to the principle of the constitution, which strictly goes to maintain both the one and the other inviolate. Such laws must ever be considered as sanctioned by justice. If they have any thing in them beyond the ordinary mildness of our constitution, it is because the occasion called them into action, against the desperate designs of those who were meditating its subversion. It is not sufficient to say, that these laws were unknown to our ancestors; and that they are therefore at variance with the principles of our constitution.—The answer is obvious: These times, and the crimes growing out of them, were equally unknown to our forefathers. Their laws

laws were suitable to the period in which they lived, and grew out of their situation. So must it be with ours. No system of laws can be invariable. In proportion as new crimes engender new dangers, they induce the necessity of fresh laws, to counteract their influence upon the manners, opinions, and morals of society. To say, therefore, that our ancestors were strangers to such laws, is not to prove that they are oppressive; it only goes to establish that they lived at a period when the loyalty and good sense of the people rendered them unnecessary.—Let those who complain against these laws, show by their conduct that there is no occasion for them, and they will be done away. But while every day produces some new outrage against the rights of individuals, and some fresh attack upon the authority of Government, they will continue to appear, what they really are, a security to the public, and a safeguard to the constitution.

It is for the repeal of these laws, and the substitution of opposite measures, that your Lordship contends. It is for the introduction of such a system of conciliation as would go, in its effect, to show to the country that Government

vernment felt it had either abused, or overstrained its authority. Where are the proofs that a spirit of returning duty would be the happy result of such a policy?

Would your Lordship impress upon the public mind, that the government of Ireland has blindly coerced the people, without endeavouring, by measures of lenity, to supersede the necessity of so doing? When his Majesty's Ministers came into possession of those materials from whence the proofs of this great conspiracy to overthrow the constitution, and deliver the country into the hands of the enemy, were deduced, what was their first act? To issue a mild proclamation, endeavouring to recall the deluded within the pale of the laws, by offering a full pardon to all such as had taken the illegal oath administered by these societies, provided they came in within a limited period, acknowledged their error, entered into a recognition, and took the oath of allegiance to his Majesty. Here then was lenity. What was its effect? Your Lordship states (though I do not vouch for the accuracy of this statement), that (from the best information you have been able to collect) these societies of  
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United Irishmen have *tripled their numbers* since first the Report was published which exposed their traitorous designs. At that period they rated themselves in numbers to the extent of near one hundred thousand men. If an offer of pardon has the operation of increasing the number of the disaffected in the alarming proportion your Lordship states, what would be the general consequence of an universal system of concession, founded in the principle of admitting the measures of Government to have been either erroneous or oppressive? Your Lordship's own statement, therefore, proves the necessity of the case for which we contend, and vindicates the conduct of Government, by showing that those discontents have their origin in causes which they cannot control, since the spirit of disaffection has thus increased, notwithstanding the earliest efforts on their part to subdue it, by the adoption of such lenient measures as your Lordship recommends.

Thus, my Lord, I have endeavoured to demonstrate—

First—That many parts in the north of Ireland

and in the year 1796 were in a situation of extreme disorder, from the lawless conduct of these desperate incendiaries.

Secondly—That the conduct of Government for a series of years towards the people of Ireland has been such as could not in its natural result have produced these commotions; but that they grew out of a traitorous system of disaffection, which had for its object to subvert, by sanguinary violence, the ancient laws and constitutions of the realm.

Thirdly—That the spirit of discontent which prevailed at that period had arisen to such an alarming height as to break out into acts of open rebellion against the constituted authorities of the state; and induced the necessity for those restrictive laws which, enacted subsequently to the existence of such discontents, could not have been the occasion of them; and which laws were neither in their principle nor operation, at variance with the spirit of our constitution.

And lastly—That it was only when the civil power became too weak to protect the subject,

subject, and when the lenity of Government had only the effect of rendering the conspirators more bold, that his Majesty's Ministers, in the discharge of an imperious duty, had recourse, in the year 1797, to military authority, to protect those laws which at different periods, and in various instances, had been so daringly violated both before and during the year 1796.

If this statement of facts be correct, and it is for your Lordship and the world at large to disprove it, it amounts to a complete vindication of the conduct of the government of Ireland, inasmuch as that it clearly establishes that the present discontents which prevail in that country do not arise from any oppression on the part of his Majesty's Ministers, but have principally their origin in the factious views of some individuals, and the traitorous designs of others. Having vindicated his Majesty's Ministers, I shall now proceed to offer a short justification in behalf of the British and Irish troops stationed there, who have been represented to the public as acting in a manner derogatory to the high reputation they have ever borne.

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They have been charged with unnecessary severity in the exercise of their duty. No man better knows than your Lordship, that such conduct is repugnant to the character, to the spirit, and to the well-known feelings of the British soldier. That some irregularities, to which even the best state of discipline is liable, may have been committed, is not improbable; and these may in some degree have been the result of previous provocation, and grown out of the nature of the service; where, from the necessity of employing severity in some cases, the tempers of men may have been warmed into excess on both sides.

One of the facts most relied upon is, the burning of houses. Has this happened but in cases which plead their own apology? in cases when, rather than deliver up concealed arms, individuals have suffered the thatched roof of their houses to be destroyed? But I would ask your Lordship, whether on such occasions the soldiers themselves have not previously assisted in removing the furniture out of them? and whether you have not heard of a variety of instances of individuals offering to swear they had surrendered up their arms, when upon searching

searching their houses, and pulling down the roof, pikes and other warlike weapons have been found concealed in the walls, and other places? and, whether you have not understood, that in general such searches were only made upon positive information being lodged of arms being there concealed? If this should not have come within your Lordship's knowledge, at least you will find it to have occurred in your own county, in various places, and particularly in the barony of Ards. Can your Lordship state an instance of any house having been destroyed, which the hard necessity of the case did not justify; from the party dwelling therein having provoked his own fate; either from being active in those nightly depredations on peaceable inhabitants, which no law or police could guard against, or refusing to surrender up arms concealed for the notorious purpose of turning them against his country?

In the discharge of such a duty, perhaps, individual soldiers may have exceeded their authority; and the particular case must be lamented, under the general necessity of having recourse to a measure, which the disloyal

obstinacy of the disaffected alone rendered necessary.

But when we are dwelling upon these severities (which I mean not in each individual instance to vindicate, and should be the first to deplore), let us not turn from the provocations the soldiers have received, and the atrocities they were called upon to restrain. Have they not seen their comrades maimed? Has your Lordship never heard that General LAKE was necessitated to threaten to burn the town of New Town Ards, if a soldier was killed, from the centries being fired at in the night? Have they not been engaged in open day? Have they not seen the active emissaries of these united societies travelling every where throughout the country, to seduce them from their colours, to swear them into their societies, to bind them to the French, and to make them rebels to their King? Had not this been attended with melancholy success, in instances well known to your Lordship? And could then the great body of the army, as gallant in their spirit as they are pure and untainted in their loyalty, see cruelty and treason conspiring against the brave defenders of the liberties of all,



all, without feeling a virtuous indignation against those parricides, who, in striving to destroy their country, were seeking to render them the accomplices of their guilt, and the partners of their shame?—No! my Lord, that gallant army, the pride and prop of their country, were not to become the blood-stained associates of so base a cause; and in the indignation which they felt at these wicked endeavours to alienate them from their allegiance, and debauch them from their standards, their resentment may, perhaps, in some instances, have been measured by the sentiment of their wrongs.

But what are these instances of harshness, which we have yet to learn, when compared with the cruelties committed by the United Irishmen, with which we are all acquainted? One man, it is asserted, has fainted on the picket, and recovered (I mean not to justify the act); but where are the victims of these sanguinary revolutionists? In the cold grave!—Seek not then, my Lord, to turn the indignation of the public from them to the British soldiery, employed in the defence and protection of the country, and foremost in the post of danger; but

but rather point it at those barbarous men, who, trampling upon all laws, and violating all justice, have carried death and woe into the mansions of their victims ! Let the cries of the orphan and the widow reach that breast in which so much munificence and humanity are known to dwell. Their wrongs, my Lord, are a subject as worthy of your eloquence, as they have been found deserving of the sympathy and remuneration of their country. Instead, therefore, of arraigning particular instances of misconduct among the soldiers, dwell on the enormities which have excited their indignation, and, possibly, provoked their intemperance. Collect before them the children of a HAMILTON, and a CUMMINS, sheltered under their bayonets from the merciless fury of the assassins of their fathers ; and then, in this powerful appeal to the best feelings of their nature, pardon the soldier if he has sometimes erred in the limits of his duty. If your Lordship must speak to the passions, here are *facts* for your guide ; and the tears of the fatherless for your subject !

In the instances of these acts of oppression and cruelty, what measure of justice was ever dealt

dealt out to the sufferers by the United Irishmen? But in the case of the soldiers, where is the individual who can say that the tribunals were shut upon his complaints; or that his wrongs have been unredressed upon appealing to the laws of his country?

My Lord, it is as much the interest, as it is the duty of Government, to protect the subject: and to show to your Lordship, that while it will firmly maintain its own authority on the one hand, it will not, on the other, protect its agents in the abuse of that authority, I have only to recall your Lordship's recollection (for I wish to convince by facts) to a recent instance at the last assizes at Dundalk, when a Captain of an Irish regiment quartered there, was sentenced by Baron YELVERTON to a heavy fine, and three months imprisonment, for an act of injustice to an individual who had appealed to the laws for redress; holding out, in this instance of impartial justice, the bright example to the people, of the difference between anarchy, strong enough to injure, yet too weak to redress, and the blessings of a mild and regular government like ours, possessing strength sufficient to restrain



strain injustice, without the power or the will to perpetrate it. It is by examples like these, that the people are taught to feel their best security to consist in obeying the laws; and their surest protection to be found in uniting to maintain them.

Thus, my Lord, when the nature of the service, the state of the country, and the feelings of the army, are considered, I believe it will appear that their conduct in general has been regular and correct; and that the individual instances of severity which may have occurred, are either too few in their number to be noticed, or too trifling in their nature to be made the subject of public accusation. To such instances I am persuaded your Lordship would turn with the deepest regret; and on those of a contrary nature, I feel you would dwell with the pleasure which arises in the breast of a soldier, when rescuing his profession from unmerited stain.

At Belfast (where certainly the military were unwelcome visitors) the uniform good conduct of the Scotch battalions is the theme of general praise with the inhabitants. The

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mild and conciliating manners and conduct of General LAKE, in the discharge of his painful duty have equalled the testimony of their respect. At Carrickfergus, you will find the British troops vying with this example, and their peaceable deportment approved by the inhabitants. Again, to the northward, at Colerain you may hear the conduct of the Somersetshire Fencibles the subject of their praise. Traverse the country from thence to Ballycastle, and you may learn, that when the British troops quartered there, in July last, were relieved by another detachment sent from Carrickfergus, many of the town's-people rose at the early hour of four o'clock in the morning, to give them three cheers on their departure, as a testimony of their approbation of the good conduct and discipline they had maintained in the town, while quartered near a year among them.

I quote these few instances to your Lordship, as liable to have fallen within the range of your own observation ; and possibly, if your inquiries had extended further, the same results, in other parts of the country, might have established the most honourable testi-

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monies in favour of the general good conduct and character of the army at large.

Thus stands the case between the government of Ireland, the army, and that portion of the people who have enrolled themselves in these traitorous societies. That they are numerous, I admit; that they are daring, their conduct shows; but that they can succeed, no man who knows that army, or is acquainted with the unshaken loyalty of the more numerous body of the people, will allow.

Let not the disaffected, nor our enemies, therefore be elated, by the mistaken picture which your Lordship has been prompted to lay before their view.

Far be it from me to impute to your Lordship a sentiment adverse to the glory and happiness of your country. But, my Lord, without disputing the purity of your intentions, suffer me to consider the policy of giving such statements to the public of our internal situation, at this important crisis, as may, by cherishing this spirit of disaffection, animate the



the enemy, and excite despondency among ourselves.

My Lord, when they come from you, they no longer are treated as the fleeting calumnies of the day ; they become grave and substantial charges, when the place, the matter, and the rank of the individual are considered, who thus accuses his Majesty's ministers with oppression.

To the public, which has received your Lordship's statement, I submit these observations ; which, though obscure and anonymous, your Lordship will perceive, proceed from a quarter not entirely destitute of the means of refuting it.

And now, my Lord, that I have endeavoured to show (and I hope not unsuccessfully) that the conduct of his Majesty's ministers, as well as of the army in Ireland, has been such as to merit the approbation of their country, instead of those censures which your Lordship bestows, I should feel my engagement to the public incomplete, if I neglected on this occasion doing justice to the conduct and to the services of

his Majesty's chief governor in that quarter, the EARL CAMDEN. Few men have better deserved of their country in the course of the awful struggle in which we are engaged; or have devoted themselves more zealously to the duties of an anxious and severe responsibility. However various may be the opinions of men on the measures of Government, the sentiment of public respect universally attaches to him, when either his private virtues, or his public conduct in the discharge of his official duty, are the subjects of their consideration. Placed in a situation most arduous, and called to it at a moment most critical to the interests, and perhaps to the fate of both kingdoms, it is to the prudence, the moderation, and the uniformly able conduct of that nobleman, that the people of Ireland are indebted for being rescued from the horrors of a civil war, to which the violence of party, and the frenzy of disaffection, were mutually driving them with alarming speed. I admit, with your Lordship, it is easy to recall him;—the difficulty would be, to replace him.

I have the honour to be,

My LORD, &c. &c.

CIVIS.



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